

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Highway Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Highway Committee Minutes
August 7, 2014**

A meeting of the Highway Committee of the DeKalb County Board was held on Thursday, August 7, 2014 at 6:00pm in the Conference Room of the DeKalb County Highway Department, DeKalb, Illinois.

Vice Chairman Pietrowski called the meeting to order at 6:06pm. Committee members present were Mr. Frieders, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Jones and Mr. O'Barski. Chairman Gudmunson and Mr. Deverell were absent. County Engineer, Nathan Schwartz, Support Services Manager, Wayne Davey, Ms. Dianne Leifheit, Ms. Sue Willis and Mr. Tice Cole were also present. Mr. Schwartz introduced the newest member of the Schwartz family, Samuel Ray Schwartz, born June 30th, to the Committee. Samuel was accompanied by mother Marcy and everyone is doing fine.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Jones to approve the minutes of the regular June 5, 2014 meeting and the special June 18, 2014 meeting. The motion to approve both sets of minutes passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mr. Frieders moved and Mr. O'Barski seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

2015 BUDGET DISCUSSION: The Committee was provided a copy of the Highway Department's 2015 budget submission for review. The County Engineer reviewed each of the five budgets that flow through the County Board, highlighting items of interest/concern for the Department. The Highway Department is estimating revenues at \$6,219,500.00 and expenditures of \$10,180,645.00 for the budget year of 2015. Approximately \$4,024,700.00 will be pulled from all fund balances, however the fund balances remain in a healthy state. Mr. Schwartz explained to the Committee that although it might seem like a lot of funds being drawn from the fund balances, that this is normal for this Department to save up for high dollar construction projects, then spend down as the projects are scheduled for construction. Next year will see an

aggressive construction program for the County as several bridge projects and road projects are scheduled. Personnel issues were discussed in two areas. One dealing with overtime in the Engineering Division and winter/summer hires for the Operations Division. Additional overtime will be required for the Engineering Technicians as they oversee road and bridge projects scheduled for next year. Operations will need to increase their summer hires from 4 to 6 to more effectively complete summer work assignments. Currently mowers are pulled off their assigned tasks during the summer when needed to assist in flagging and other duties. Operations could only fill three of their four mowing positions this year. The County Engineer feels this is due to the County paying the lowest hourly rate between the Cities and Northern Illinois University for like positions. The County's summer hire rate has been the same for the past ten years and is currently the minimum hourly rate required for the State of Illinois. The County Engineer is requesting this hourly rate be increased to \$9.25 in order to attract qualified personnel during the summer. Two winter snow plow drivers are hired every winter to augment permanent staff. The normal cost of these hires is \$25,000 and this budget is requesting that cost be reflected in the 3510 highway budget. Currently there is only \$20,000 budgeted in seasonal line, therefore the need for an increase.

Overall, 47% of all revenue (including fund balance spending) will go toward construction projects for 2015; 23% will go toward salaries and benefits; 11% for normal day to day operations of the Department; 7% for equipment, 7% contributions to other budgets and 5% for winter maintenance materials.

Discussion was held concerning Motor Fuel Tax dollars and Matching Tax dollars. Mr. Schwartz provided a brief history of the funding, how it came to be and how it can be legally spent.

Mr. Schwartz stated he knew this was a lot of information presented and discussed in a short period of time and if anyone has any questions as they review the budget information to feel free to contact the Highway Department and speak with him or Wayne.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS: Vice Chairman Pietrowski congratulated Mr. Schwartz for his recent selection for the Illinois Award of the Year by the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers.

COUNTY ENGINEER'S COMMENTS: Mr. Schwartz commented on the growing concern about winter salt for the upcoming winter season. The County had the option of renewing their current contract for one additional year and they exercised that option. Smaller municipalities and townships that have had to go out for bids this year are finding no takers for their requests; or when they do receive a bid, the price is up to three times what the County is currently paying. In addition to that, local governments going out for rebids have to pay 100% up front for 100% of their request. In the past, 80% was the mandatory amount of product governments were required to guarantee delivery on. Hopefully this will be taken care of itself in the coming months.

The Keslinger Road Bridge project and the Peace Road Paving project both have pre-construction meetings scheduled for August 15th at IDOT. After that date, these projects will move forward and we will get a start date. This work will be started and completed yet this year.

The State passed a capital bill that will see \$100,000,000.00 coming to local agencies. This distribution will be similar in amount to the Illinois Jobs Now funds and are scheduled to be disbursed during September through the MFT distribution method.

Mr. Schwartz presented the transportation improvement progress report for July. East County Line Road stands at 9% complete for the resurfacing and intersection improvements. Five Points Road Bridge is 35% complete. Work is very good but very slow. IDOT is now involved in an attempt to get this contract back on schedule for completion this year. Perry Road Bridge is underway and should be completed prior to the October 26th completion date. West County Line Road Bridge will begin as soon as the utilities clear from the area. They are relocating gas lines and power poles. Two bridges on Somonauk Road are new additions to this report. They will be built with local tax funds in 2016 and 2017.

OTHER BUSIUNESS:

Vice Chair Pietrowski inquired about the seal coat project recently completed on Barber Greene Road. The County Engineer explained why it was done and how it preserves the road, extending the useful life between resurfacing.

Mr. Jones inquired if the current pavement cycle of 25 years would ever be revised. Mr. Schwartz stated he was reviewing factors to see if a 15 year cycle would be beneficial. This would be done with less asphalt being applied at more frequent intervals.

Mr. Frieders inquired about Sandwich Road District's hot-mix patching proposal. Mr. Schwartz explained that due to the Road District using MFT and the dollar amount of the proposal, this project was required to be bid. It was not placed in the Contractors Bulletin when requested thereby causing a week's delay when the bids can be opened. The bids will be opened on August 14th and the Committee will review and approve the award during their September meeting. The Road District Commissioner has no concerns with waiting until September's meeting and feels no special Committee meeting is required during August to award the project.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice Chairman Pietrowski asked if there was any additional items that needed to be presented tonight and hearing none asked for a motion to adjourn. **A motion was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Mr. O'Barski and the motion passed unanimously.** The August 7, 2014 meeting was adjourned at 8:24pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Pietrowski
Vice Chairman